and accord infrastructure status to the tourism industry are some of the outstanding demands of the industry which are necessary to make it viable; and

(c) if so, what is Government's decision in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN) : (a) The Prime Minister in his speech on Independence Day has mentioned the proposed Tourism Policy which has given very positive signals to tourism industry.

(b) Department of Tourism has been taking up the various demands of the Industry including rationalisation of taxes with the appropriate authorities for action.

(c) The discussions with Central authorities and State Governments are continuing in this regard.

Provision of toilets and walkways in monuments

2404. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has decided to make certain historical sites 'disabled friendly';

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by Government to make toilets and walkways in all the monuments disabled friendly in a phased manner ?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Archaeological Survey of India has taken a policy decision in this regard. Provisions for ramps, appropriate toilets and braille sign boards will be set up in a phased manner in monuments/sites wherever feasible.

Misuse of government money

†2405. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the amount given under various heads by Government is being misused on a large scale and an incident related to use of this amount by the office bearers of the organisations for personal interests has come to light ;

(b) if so, the organisation-wise/money-wise/year-wise details thereof ;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) whether it is also a fact that CBI inquiry is being conducted into the above irregularities; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN) : (a) No such instance has come to the notice of the Government.

(b) to (d) Questions do not arise.

Development of Ajanta-Ellora caves

2406. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Japan Bank of International Corporation (JBIC) has agreed to extend Rs. 350 crore loan for the second phase of Ajanta-Ellora conservation and tourism development project ;

(b) if so, the details of the project which will be taken in phase-II;

(c) by when, these works would start; and

(d) the details of projects which have since been completed for the development of Ajanta-Ellora caves under phase-I with the help of JBIC?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN) : (a) to (c) The matter is under discussion with the authorities.

(d) The details of projects which have been completed under phase-I with the help of JBIC are as follows :—

(i) Monument conservation and improvement of approach path to caves.
(ii) Extension of airport runway and upgradation.
(iii) Afforestation of 736 hectares of forest land near the caves.
(iv) Upgradation of 162 kms of road in Ajanta-Ellora region.
(v) Raising height of Tondapore irrigation dam and installation of water supply system at caves.
(vi) Augmentation of water supply at caves and provision of related supply network.
(vii) Visitor Management System.

Incentives to tourists

2407. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in News Time dated the 3rd October, 2001 captioned "Hotel Industry goes for the hard sell"; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto and the steps taken/